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MEDIA RELEASE

Sydney Water taps micro-drama trend to prevent blocked pipes and protect beaches

Images and footage available for media use [here](#)

With over 12,000 wastewater blockages a year, Sydney Water is taking a fresh approach to an ongoing issue, tapping the global micro-drama trend to help people rethink what goes down their toilets and drains.

Launching this weekend, Sydney Water's new *Pipe Dramas* wastewater campaign uses short, soap-opera style videos to encourage customers to only flush the three Ps and keep fats, oils and grease out of drains.

Sydney Water spends around \$24 million each year managing the impacts of thousands of wastewater blockages, which includes overflow clean-ups, network repairs and other operational costs.

Sydney Water Principal Manager Environment Ben Armstrong said many wastewater blockages were caused by fats, oils and grease combining with items like wipes* and sanitary products in the network.

"It's important to remember that what goes down our toilets and drains doesn't just disappear. Small actions in millions of homes have a big impact on our wastewater system," Mr Armstrong said.

"Fats, oils and grease from cooking and kitchen waste are placing increasing pressure on the network, with oil and grease loads in the Malabar catchment rising by almost 40 per cent over the past decade.

"Keeping these pollutants out of the network is one of the simplest ways to prevent blocked pipes at home, protect our beaches and waterways, and help to reduce overflows and debris ball events."

A recent Sydney Water survey found more than half of customers still believe it's OK to flush something other than the three Ps - pee, poo and toilet paper, highlighting the need for ongoing education campaigns.

Pipe Dramas forms part of Sydney Water's community education program, which is required under the EPA Environment Protection Licence (NSW EPL) for the Malabar wastewater system and supports broader efforts to reduce pollutants entering waterways and beaches.

While Sydney Water continues to invest heavily in wastewater infrastructure and upgrades, customer behaviour remains one of the most effective ways to reduce pressure on the wastewater network.

Pipe Dramas is believed to be one of the first campaigns by an Australian utility to use micro-dramas to encourage behaviour change, tapping into one of the fastest-growing forms of digital entertainment.

Popular among younger audiences, micro-dramas use over-the-top plot twists, cliff-hangers, continuity errors and unexpected edits to capture attention and make messages more memorable.

Pipe Dramas will run for six weeks across TV, radio, digital, social media, public transport and outdoor advertising.

* Some wipes may be safe to flush if they comply with the Australian/New Zealand Flushable Products Standard (AS/NZS 5328:2022). Look for products that clearly state they comply with this Standard on the packaging.

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